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## **“MANAGED ENROLLMENT” TO GUIDE STATE COLLEGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW HIGHER ED MASTER PLAN**

**BATON ROUGE** – The Louisiana Board of Regents for higher education has received the results of a study to guide state colleges and universities in the successful implementation of the Regents’ new Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education and ultimately to better serve students.

The study, conducted for the Regents by Denver-based Noel-Levitz, included a thorough review of enrollment goals established by the new master plan, which goes into effect by fall 2005, and recommendations on what state colleges and universities must do to meet those goals.

The master plan, approved by Regents last March, provides a statewide blueprint designed to increase participation in the state’s postsecondary education system, improve student retention and graduation rates and increase satisfaction rates among students. In addition, the plan sets an admission standards framework for all four-year public universities and focuses the role, scope and mission of each institution.

“These [enrollment-related] goals are realistic and attainable,” the report said, “but only if the colleges and universities change their approach to managing enrollment.”

Traditionally, in an open-enrollment climate, student recruitment and enrollment strategies have centered on broad approaches. This report recommends a more focused effort of enrollment management to “achieve enrollment goals by exerting more control over those institutional factors that shape the size and characteristics of the student body.” This approach is achieved through a mix of marketing, recruitment, financial aid leveraging, student support and retention and allocation of

campus resources.

“We’re changing the culture of how we recruit and retain students,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “We are promoting early, targeted contacts with Louisiana students instead of simply recruiting students in their senior year of high school. We want students to be better prepared for college success. We want campuses to pursue strategic efforts that promote greater student success. If we accept a student, we expect that student to graduate and we must do all that we can do to help that student. This is about access for success.”

In conducting the study, Noel-Levitz examined current college enrollment in Louisiana; evaluated the potential impact of the new admissions criteria on campus enrollment; and assessed statewide and institutional enrollment goals, management strategies and commitment of resources to those goals; evaluated potential facility and capacity issues systemwide; and assessed the climate for change, statewide and on college campuses.

Noel-Levitz made numerous recommendations on what campuses, the Board of Regents and the four college and university systems should do by 2005 to meet the requirements of the new master plan. Those 67 recommendations ranged from planning and marketing to financial aid and technology and included specific suggestions such as creation of a statewide enrollment planning database to aid campus enrollment managers, a statewide marketing research effort to gauge public perception of state colleges and universities, implementation of an early-alert system that identifies students at risk, and a comprehensive utilization study of existing campus buildings and space.

“This study,” Savoie said, “will help us guide our policies and build capacity in a targeted manner for the 2005 implementation.”

The commissioner said the management boards that manage the state’s four college and university systems – Louisiana Community and Technical College System, LSU System, Southern University System and the University of Louisiana System – will be asked to design “campus by campus” strategies and time lines for implementing these recommendations and the master plan.